

Risks of the International Flower Trade

Carmen M.S. SAMOILĂ, Sabina FUNAR, Tiberia I. POP

Faculty of Horticulture, University of Agricultural Sciences and Veterinary Medicine, 3-5
Calea Mănăştur, 400372 Cluj-Napoca, Romania; carmensamoila2007@yahoo.com

SUMMARY

This paper presents a risk analysis of the international flower trade. As in any other mediation, the brokerage between flower producers, traders and end customers is not random, being conditioned by the active involvement of each participant in this trade. Although all activities involved in the flower trade are planned, there are a series of risks regarding the production of healthy plant material, the harvesting and the transport under optimal conditions, until reaching the final consumer. All European Union member countries have a pest control (PC). The international standard for phytosanitary measures called "Determining the pest status in an area" allows the member countries of the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC) and other interested countries to access *harmonized directives*. These directives are necessary to obtain more information about different pests in a certain area. The introduction of new pests can be easily done by transporting plants from one area to another. It is very important to gather information on the plant pests, because they represent a real danger to other areas where they could reach. In the EU phytosanitary legislation, the area where the absence of a pest was scientifically certified, even if the absence is maintained by the application of control measures, was called *free area*. Thus, there have been identified the following free areas: threatened areas, quarantine areas, controlled areas, regulated areas and buffer areas (Perju and Bircă, 2006). Another danger that has negative effects on soil, water and human health is represented by the use of large quantities of chemicals which are often poorly managed. It is therefore recommended to reduce the usage of those products. In some greenhouses, more than 120 chemicals are used to treat plant diseases, fight against pests, improve the resistance to the transport procedures and prolong plants life. Unfortunately, these plants are preferred for their longer life, lower prices, but those who know they are full of chemical compounds avoid them. Thus, many countries who produce and export flowers obtained by chemical treatments would rather import flowers from ecological cultures, with natural perfume, which do not harm the human health, even if they are sold at higher prices (<http://viata>). In conclusion, although the economic crisis persists and there is the tendency of selling cheap products, people should be aware about the dangers to which they are exposed by buying products from non-ecological cultures. Therefore we recommend the International legislation to be known by all countries involved in floral trade. They should study the official statistics and reports about the phytosanitary risks that endanger soil, vegetation, water and population when they come in contact with pests and harmful chemicals.

Keywords: chemicals, health, control, business, legislation

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